

## Uncle Sam Housekeeper For Employees in Panama

Government Supplies Everything and Discrimination Is Not Known, Says Mrs. Goethals, Wife of Chief Engineer.

How would you like to accept Uncle Sam as a housekeeper who successfully solved for you all the problems of the otherwise high cost of living? How would you like that benevolent uncle to go still further and so regulate your life that you would be forced to live among your fellow-employees on a basis of absolute frankness in which there is no chance for little deceptions about income or expenditure?

Well, there are a lot of good American women in just this fix on the Canal Zone at Panama, where the biggest ditch in the world is being dug. The conditions under which they live are to be found no place else under the flag. The authority for his statement is Mrs. George W. Goethals, wife of the man who is heading the big job. Mrs. Goethals is visiting in Washington and recently granted a newspaper interview—a thing which she very seldom does.

**Contented and Happy.**  
"The American woman at Panama is the most contented and happy woman that I know," said she enthusiastically. "This is because the very manner of life at Panama relieves her of petty worries. Uncle Sam buys for her the best in the market and sells it to her again at cost, so she still lives cheaply while all the women back home are worrying about high prices. Uncle Sam classifies his employees in such a way that you have but to see the house in which a given family lives to know the salary of the resident. This makes deception impossible. Everybody lives frankly for what he is, and it is hard to conceive the extent to which this simplifies life."

**The distinctive features of Panama** life come about through the supervision that the government has over all things in Panama. Practically everybody on the Canal Zone works for the government. There are no provisions for homes nor supplies when Uncle Sam started the big work. So the homes are government

built and the supplies are bought at the commissary.  
"The house in which one lives is the first thing that breaks down the wall of deception. There is a certain class house for the twelve-hundred-dollar employee, another class for the eighteen-hundred-dollar man, still another for the three thousand man, and so on indefinitely through all the grades."

**The Smiths live in the grade of house** that is allotted to \$2,500 employees. There is nothing allowed similar employees that they may not have. There is nothing that they may have that is not also allowed to all families of their grade. As the houses are furnished by the government, no house of a given class may have articles of convenience or ornament that are not allowed to all other houses of their class.

**Lesson in Frankness.**  
"So, in the first place, there is no possibility of selling under false colors in these matters and there is no possibility of one household being able to outdo another. It is a lesson in enforced frankness that is probably taught in no other community of this size in the world."

**There is likewise no possibility of** deception in the matter of food. Everything comes from the government commissary. Priced lists of everything in stock with the current prices opposite are regularly distributed. When one woman gives a luncheon she has little opportunity to surprise her guest, for it is to be made up from the same list from which they have been making their purchases. Living in Panama is incomparably cheaper than in the States. The government commissary buys all its supplies in large quantities at wholesale. Water transportation is cheap, as it costs little to transport them to the Canal Zone. When there they are sold at cost to the casual workers.

**Women Make Own Clothes.**  
"The government does not provide us with our clothes, and here is one matter in which there may be rivalry."

But even here no great advantage may be had for the general plan is to buy whatever happens to be in the shops. Some few women send to the States for their clothes and others go back home often enough to keep themselves replenished. The majority who deal in the local shops find themselves more or less embarrassed because of the lack of dressmakers. Most of us make our own clothes and here there may be a rivalry in needle work, but the woman who wins deserves her advantage. Some of the costumes so made are a revelation. I have seen good material made into a skirt which was merely sewed up the back and gathered at the waist on a gathering string.

**There can even be no rivalry in the** matter of being sick. Whoever is ill is taken to the government hospital and there all receive the same care, for all are given every possible attention.

**Cupid Busy in Hospitals.**  
"Cupid, though, works havoc with the corps of trained nurses in our hospitals. They are all American girls, graduates of some nursing school in the United States. They look very attractive to our lonely bachelors. But after the question is asked and answered Uncle Sam has a peculiar way in Panama of settling the wedding day. A couple cannot be married until the government gives them a house, and there are so many demands for houses it seems impossible to build them fast enough. The consequence is that a couple has to take its turn on the waiting list and the marriage is performed the day his home is completed."

**The American woman when she first** went to Panama was the source of the greatest curiosity to the native women. These latter, in accordance with the old Spanish custom, never let sunlight into their houses, much less did they dress and come forth, until about 5 in the afternoon. When they saw "La Americana" don her trim white suit and sally forth with her husband at 7 in the morning to tramp miles over the site of the canal, they were dumfounded. Again when they saw her care for her own yard—planting flowers and cultivating them, they could not understand it. But when they finally saw her mark off a tennis court, put up her net and take this unnecessary and vigorous exercise, it surprised understanding.

**Does Family Washing.**  
"The government has built the churches and there is no rivalry even in these edifices, but each is built to accommodate the given congregation. The government likewise builds the clubs; and the combination of Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Association Building is one of the finest in the world.  
"Uncle Sam goes so far as to do the

## LATEST WAR PICTURES FROM THE BALKANS.



Montenegrin soldiers starting for the front at left. Albanian women fleeing the path of retreating Turkish forces at right.

## WATERING MILK NO NEW THING

They Had Remedies to Fit the Crime in the Olden Times, However.

Special Cable to The Washington Herald.  
Paris, Nov. 22.—The milkman who waters his milk and the grocer who adulterates his butter were not, after all, the products of our modern civilization and the culture of the board school. These gentlemen, it appears, have an ancestry, if one may use the word, of a respectable antiquity. Witness an edict which an antiquary assigned in the archives of Puy-de-Dome, in which the punishments assigned to the various forms of fraud fit the crime with a quibbling completeness. Thus, "whoever shall have sold watered milk, in his mouth shall be set a tube, and in to the said tube shall be poured the watered milk till the doctor or barber there present shall assert that the culprit cannot swallow more without being put in danger of his life. Whoever shall have sold butter containing turnips, stones, or any other foreign substance shall be seized and attached in a very curious manner to our pillory of Fontaine."

One would like to know what the "very curious manner" was.  
"Then the said butter shall be placed on his head till the sun shall have melted it completely, and in the meantime the children and men of the village shall insult him with such outrageous epithets as shall please them—subject to the respect of God and his majesty. Whoever shall have sold evil or rotten eggs shall be seized by the body and exposed in our pillory of Fontaine. The said eggs shall be given to the children of the villages, who shall, by way of joyful diversion, throw them in the face of the culprit, so that all may be full of merriment and laughter."

Why?

**From Judge's Library.**  
"Religious folks are never boastful, are they, ma?"  
"Certainly not, child. But what put that idea into your head?"  
"I noticed, at the 'experience' meeting, that many told what religion had done for them, but did not mention that they had done anything for it."

Perplexed.

**From Judge's Library.**  
"Come round to her less often."  
"I see another one of our patients is dead."  
"Yes; and I am greatly perturbed over his case. I gave him two kinds of medicine and don't know which one it was that killed him."

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